

Message Text

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11

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20

USIA-15 OMB-01 IO-14 SCA-01 SCS-03 DRC-01 /112 W

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P R 180744Z JAN 74

FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2103

INFO AMEMBASSY TOKYO

CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SEOUL 437

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, KS

SUBJ: ARREST OF CHRISTIAN SOCIAL ACTIVISTS

BEGIN SUMMARY: SEVERAL PROTESTANT MINISTERS INCLUDING NATIONAL COUNCIL OF CHRISTIAN CHURCHES SECRETARY WERE ARRESTED AFTER MEETING IN WHICH ANTI-GOVERNMENT DECLARATION WAS SIGNED. AMERICAN METHODIST MISSIONARY WAS PRESENT AT MEETING AND LATER INTERROGATED BY ROK/CIA AND RELEASED. END SUMMARY.

1. ON JAN 17 GROUP OF FIVE OR SIX PROTESTANT MINISTERS INVOLVED IN SOCIAL ACTION MET IN CHRISTIAN BROADCASTING SERVICE BUILDING. ALSO PRESENT AT MEETING WAS NCCC SECRETARY KIM KWAN-SUK AND AN AMERICAN METHODIST MISSIONARY WALTER DURST.

2. AT MEETING MINISTERS REPORTEDLY SIGNED AN ANTI-GOVERNMENT DECLARATION CONTENTS OF WHICH WE DO NOT KNOW. ACCORDING TO ONE AMERICAN SOURCE, KIM KWAN-SUK DID NOT SIGN DECLARATION NOTING THAT GOVERNMENT ALREADY AWARE OF HIS VIEWS. WE ALSO UNDERSTAND THAT THE AMERICAN MISSIONARY, DURST, TOOK PICTURES OF GATHERING AND HAD RECORDED AT LEAST PART OF MEETING ON HIS OWN TAPE RECORDER, APPARENTLY FOR HISTORICAL PURPOSES.

3. AFTER MEETING, ALL OF KOREAN PARTICIPANTS, INCLUDING KIM,
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WERE ARRESTED. TO BEST OF OUR KNOWLEDGE, THEY STILL REMAIN IN

CUSTODY.

4. DURST WAS ALSO PICKED UP BY ROK/CIA AGENTS AT HIS HOME MID-AFTERNOON JAN 17 AND INTERROGATED FOR SIX HOURS BEFORE BEING RELEASED. WE UNDERSTAND THAT WHILE HE WAS NOT PHYSICALLY ABUSED, HE WAS SUBJECTED TO INTENSIVE VERBAL INTERROGATION. AMERICAN SOURCE CLOSE TO METHODIST MISSION INFORMS US THAT DURST WAS FINALLY LET GO WITH WARNING THAT IF HE HAD BEEN KOREAN, HE WOULD HAVE BEEN CHARGED AND SENTENCED UNDER EMERGENCY MEASURES. HE WAS ALSO TOLD THAT IF HE ENGAGED IN ANY IMPROPER ACTIVITIES IN THE FUTURE, HE WOULD IN FACT BE TRIED UNDER EMERGENCY MEASURES.

5. WHEN ROK/CIA AGENTS PICKED UP MISSIONARY THEY ALSO CONFISCATED HIS CAMERA AND TAPE RECORDING EQUIPMENT. ASSUMPTION IN MISSIONARY CIRCLES IS THAT BOTH PICTURES AND TAPE RECORDING WILL SEVERELY COMPROMISE ALL OF PARTICIPANTS IN MEETING.

6. EMBASSY LEARNED THAT DURST WAS BEING INTERROGATED BY ROK/CIA EVENING OF JAN 17. AT THAT TIME EMBOFF CALLED HIS WIFE TO ASCERTAIN HER HUSBAND'S STATUS. WHEN SHE INFORMED HIM THAT HER HUSBAND WAS STILL BEING HELD BY ROK/CIA, SPECIAL ASSISTANT CALLED ROK/CIA LIAISON OFFICER TO ASCERTAIN SITUATION. LIAISON OFFICER TOLD HIM THAT MISSIONARY HAD ALREADY BEEN RELEASED AND LATER PHONE CALL TO DURST'S HOME CONFIRMED THIS FACT.

7. SINCE HIS RELEASE DURST HAS MADE NO ATTEMPT TO CONTACT EMBASSY. ERICSON

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Message Attributes

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Executive Order: GS
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